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ABSTRACT

The present status and position of the Catalan language are assessed, and the language planning activities being carried out in Catalonia to promote it are examined. The historical development of Catalan is outlined, and the current situation in Catalonia is described, focusing on its uses among immigrants and in modern mass communications. The likely future of Catalan is discussed, particularly in relation to Castilian Spanish. It is concluded that the immediate future of Catalan is promising, and that its survival as a family language is assured. Whether it acquires and sustains a status as a genuinely equal language with Castilian depends on the following: (1) whether the large non-Catalan population can be integrated into Catalonia and taught the language; (2) Catalan's effectiveness in competing with Castilian and other world languages; (3) and Spain's maintaining and developing its newly-defined character as a multilingual state. If Catalan is not to revert to being a language only of the family, it must be promoted as the sole official language of Catalonia, which would involve discriminatory policies and planning decisions that lead to unacceptable interventions in people's lives and the channeling of limited resources. (MSE)

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Clare Mar-Molinero

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CURRENT LANGUAGE PLANNING AND POLICY IN CATALONIA*

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Introduction

This paper will seek to assess the present status and position of the Catalan language and to examine the language planning activities being carried out in Catalonia to promote this language. A brief outline of the historical development of the Catalan language and a description of the situation in which it finds itself today in Catalonia will be given. The likely future for Catalan will be examined, particularly its relationship to Castilian, the main language of the Spanish state.

Whilst Catalan is spoken in some form and by a varying degree of the population as far afield as from the Spanish province of Alicante in the south to the Roussillon area of southern France in the north, including the Balearic Islands and even a small part of Sardinia, this paper will concentrate on Catalonia, the region of which Barcelona is the capital. This area, with a population of some six millions, has been an Autonomous Region since 1979 under the new Spanish constitution, and has therefore been in a position to encourage and promote the local and widely-used language, Catalan.

The official activities in Catalonia to extend the knowledge and use of Catalan have been consciously planned by the local government, and in this sense constitute a form of Language Planning. The term Language Planning will, however, be used throughout in a broad gen-

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eral sense, rather than the more specific sense of Language Planning theory developed over the last two decades.[1] The Language Planners in Catalonia do not claim to follow any deliberate Language Planning model, although they are clearly aware of the examples being implemented in many parts of the world. They are well-informed of the literature on the subject, and this may at least indirectly influence the way they have organised their planning. In particular, it would seem that they have kept the classic division between status planning and corpus planning (see Kloss 1968 and Cobarrubias 1983).

The relationship between policy makers and planners, politics and implementation is a very close one in Catalonia and one which, it will be argued, appears to guide the language planners' overall objective of total bilingualism, rather than one of, for example, eventual Catalan dominance.

The current policy being pursued is to re-introduce Catalan as an official language, alongside Castilian, at all levels within Catalonia. Whilst Catalan is a widely spoken language with a respectable written literature, opposition to this kind of promotion might have been anticipated: an obstacle to communications compared with Castilian which is so much more widely spoken, including internationally; or the expense of changing the balance of the main means of linguistic communication, being just two such possible reactions. In the event, the degree of consensus in Catalonia to the present policies has been strikingly high, reflecting, it would seem, the prevailing attitude that the language is an important symbol of Catalan ethnic and historical identity.[2]

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[1] See, for example, Haugen (1966), Rubin & Jernudd (1971), and Cobarrubias & Fishman (1983).

[2] There was no public opposition voiced during the debates on either the Autonomy statute or the Language Normalisation Law, but it must be noted that those most likely to object to the imposition of Catalan, i.e. the non-Catalan immigrant population, are by definition the least vocal or articulate. In March 1981 a group of about a hundred intellectuals, largely non-Catalan, published a leaflet against what they perceived as potential discrimination because of an over-zealous Catalanization programme. This

The historical development of Catalan

The Catalan language is a romance language which developed from around the tenth century and was the language of a highly influential seaborne empire in the Middle Ages. During this period it was a language of important literary output with all the functions traditionally designated as both High and Low (Ferguson 1959). As Catalonia became politically dominated by Castille, however, the Catalan language suffered persecution and repression and declined to being the L variety in a diglossic situation with Castilian (see Ferrer i Gerones 1985).

This situation began to change again in the nineteenth century. A re-birth in public and cultural use of Catalan came with the appropriately named *Renaixença*. This was, above all, a literary revival, seeing also the appearance of the first newspapers in Catalan and in general an upsurge in nationalistic cultural pride.[3] During the early part of the Twentieth century Catalan saw various periods of active revival, coinciding always with a progressive government in Madrid. During the period leading up to the Civil War the Catalans were allowed much in the way of self-government and Catalan became the dominant language once more. It was also during the early part of this century that much work took place on the codification of Catalan, including the publication of a definitive grammar and dictionary. Newspapers were published in Catalan and during the Thirties some schooling was in Catalan.

The Civil War and the Franco regime brought a repressive end to the use of Catalan which was proscribed for many years during this tightly centrist dictatorship. The new post-Franco democracy has allowed the language to begin to return to its former role, and now over a

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does not seem to have left much of a dent in the language programme. Another source of criticism, or only lukewarm support, has been from the (non-Catalan) Socialist Party.

[3] For a detailed discussion of the *Renaixença*, see (Vallverdu 1970: Chapter III).

decade after Franco's death it is interesting to see what progress has been made.

The use of Catalan today

Today Catalan has indeed returned to being a widely heard and used language in Catalonia, but its place as the dominant language is not so clear as would have been the case a century ago. The two main reasons why Catalan must now fight against Castilian to survive as a language suitable for all situations are first, the present demographic profile, and second, modern communications and technology.

i. Immigration

After the Civil War Catalonia experienced an enormous influx of migration, mostly from Southern Spain. The native Catalan population was therefore greatly diluted in some areas. It is estimated that almost half Catalonia's population is non-Catalan or only first generation Catalan (see e.g. Reixach 1985 and CIDC 1987a). From the point of view of learning the Catalan language, this is made worse by the fact that the majority of this immigration settled in and around Barcelona. In some areas of Greater Barcelona as many as 90% of the population are non-Catalan. Add to this the fact that these migrants arrived in Catalonia during the Franco years, years of great repression of Catalan, and the likelihood of the new arrivals learning Catalan was even less. These immigrants were also often illiterate or with very limited education. They, therefore, had very different learning needs from much of the indigenous population and provided a further challenge for the language planners.

However, immigrants to Barcelona have quickly appreciated the unusual position of Catalan: that although it is a minority and historically much-persecuted language, Catalan remains, within the boundaries where it is spoken, the community's high prestige language. Catalan is the language of the middle classes, of the boardroom, of the employed. It is perceived as the language of social mobility and therefore there

have been positive attitudes to learning at least to understand Catalan, and above all to non-Catalans allowing their children to learn Catalan.[4]

The most recent census in 1986 shows as many as 90% of the population of Catalonia claiming to understand Catalan, although considerably fewer speak it, and far fewer read and write it (CIDC 1987b). This is an improvement even on the comprehension figures reported in 1981 (and compared in the 1986 census, CIDC 1987b) and should be an optimistic sign for the Language Planners.

ii. Modern Communications and Catalan

The promotion of Catalan, in particular amongst the non-Catalan population of Catalonia also has to contend with modern mass media and communications, and easy international travel. In all these situations Castilian, or other world languages, are immediately available. Catalan has had to learn to compete for space in radio, T.V. and the press.

There is considerably more Catalan now heard in radio and T.V. broadcasts, particularly with the opening of a third state T.V. channel entirely in Catalan. Importantly, too, this does not just signify a quantitative improvement, but also a qualitative one, with Catalan being used now in all spheres of life and differing programmes, and not just, as in the past, for folkloric and chatty local events, with 'serious' discussion remaining in Castilian.

There are currently three daily newspapers published in Catalan, two based in Barcelona, and one in Gerona. All are serious publications with respectable circulations. Similarly great strides have been made in book publishing in Catalan, with the number of titles in Catalan over the last few years rocketing, helped by the fact that Barcelona has always been an important publishing centre. However, the fact remains that the market for Castilian, a world language stretching across continents, is commercially far more attractive than for Catalan.

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[4] See, for example, the surveys carried out by Sole (1983) and Strubell & Romani (1986).

It can be seen that Catalan is making progress in its bid to re-establish itself as a major national language in Catalonia. Catalan theatre is popular and active, and there is an emerging Catalan film industry. Public notices are now found in Catalan, as well as, or even instead of, Castilian. All local administration must normally now take place in Catalan, although Catalonia's official bilingualism means that the use of Castilian can be insisted upon by any individual. Shop signs, menus, train timetables, bank cheque books, and much other printed material is increasingly available, sometimes exclusively, in Catalan. Nonetheless, Catalan continues to face an uphill battle to equal or replace the widespread use of Castilian.

The legal framework for language planning in Catalonia

Language Planning activities in Catalonia result from the various legal decrees and laws that mark the commitment to the promotion of Catalan by the local government, the *Generalitat*, and, to a lesser extent, by the Spanish state.

Spain's present constitution recognises the existence of languages other than Castilian and their right to co-officialdom within the territories in which they are found. (Spanish Constitution 1978) The Catalan Statute of Autonomy extends this recognition to spell out the rights and duties of the population of Catalonia to know both languages and to use either (Catalan Autonomy Statute 1979). It also guarantees that the Generalitat will 'create suitable conditions so that full equality between the two [languages] can be achieved' within Catalonia. In 1983 the Generalitat passed the Law of Linguistic Normalisation which further clarifies and explains these rights and gives the framework for the language planning activities.

Under the Department of Culture, the Generalitat established a Directorate General of Language policy, with three sub-branches. One has responsibility for promoting the official use of the language; one has the responsibility for developing terminologies, providing translation services and Catalan classes for adults; and one is a

Sociolinguistics Institute responsible for evaluating the work of the language planners, for collating relevant literature and for analysing the basic theoretical concepts of the language questions.

The first of these sections is the one primarily responsible for the *Programa de Normalització Lingüística*, the Language Normalisation Programme. This programme is the central point in the present language planning activity, with its campaigns to promote the use of Catalan in all public and official walks of life. The term 'normalisation' is a significant one in this context as it represents the objectives of the planners to return to Catalan its 'normal' functions as a major vehicle of communication. This section has set up a region-wide network of offices working with each town council, and mou .s many campaigns and produces prolific literature. In 1986 a Catalan language Congress was held in many different venues in Catalonia which brought together not only those working to promote Catalan within Catalonia but also many international experts.

Catalan and the education system

Perhaps, however, the most interesting area of language planning lies with the Department of Education, which, surprisingly, is totally separate from the Directorate General. This department is responsible for the teaching of Catalan in the schools and colleges, but not to adults, who are served by the Directorate General.

Since 1979 much progress has been made in introducing more Catalan in the schools (see Arnau & Boada 1986), first by making some teaching of Catalan compulsory, and gradually by encouraging more and more schools to use Catalan as the medium of instruction in one or more subjects. It is now a compulsory minimum to teach at least three hours a week of Catalan plus one subject in Catalan. However, the reverse is also true for Castilian, which is important if more schools become almost entirely Catalan speaking. The equal legal provision for the two languages underlies the fact that in all these policies it can be seen that the raising of Catalan only to an equal foot-

ing with Castilian is seen as the ultimate objective. The law guarantees the right of children to begin their studies in their mother tongue, whether it be Castilian or Catalan. It is clear that the present legal position does not seek to impose Catalan through the schools, only to protect those who wish to introduce it.

There are, however, many problems for the introduction of Catalan in the schools, the most significant being the lack of suitably trained teachers and of materials. Many teachers are from outside Catalonia, particularly in the high-immigration areas, and even amongst those who are native Catalan speakers, many have not been taught or trained in Catalan. Even of those who are now competent in speaking and writing Catalan, many have not been trained to be linguistically aware of the needs of their pupils when teaching their own subject, such as, for example, maths, through a different linguistic medium. There is also the problem that there is a significant private sector in the education system. Since the language planning activities are state initiated, this makes coherence difficult. More importantly, the private schools tend to have larger numbers of native Catalan pupils and teachers, thereby creaming these people off and making integration difficult and thus losing the chance of creating more Catalan environments for children from non-Catalan families. It serves too to accentuate the social divide between the middle classes who are Catalan speaking and the migrant workers who are Castilian speaking.

To help overcome these problems, the planners have introduced immersion programmes, based to some extent on North American models. These schools, which exist only at primary level, are situated in areas of high non-Catalan populations and provide education entirely in Catalan to help immerse the child from an early age in Catalan culture. These schools only began to operate in 1983, and it is too early to see how successful they are. (see Arenas 1986 for some early evaluations) They are entirely optional and work only with the cooperation of the teachers and parents. They do, however, have their critics who believe that teachers are not yet sufficiently trained to staff these schools and that the cooperation from the community is too apathetic to be successful. They are concerned too whether children learn more slowly when

not taught in their mother tongue. There is an anxiety, also, about whether the level of funding for these programmes, including in-service training for teachers, is adequate.

The eventual aim, and legal duty, of the Catalan education system is that children will finish their basic studies at 14 bilingual in Castilian and Catalan, with equal facility in both. This is certainly not the case yet, as can be seen from various surveys that have been carried out (e.g. SEDEC 1982 and Departament d'Ensenyament 1984), but one must note that the changes are in their early stages. It is evident from these surveys that children make far faster progress in Castilian than Catalan given the same context, and that for rapid progress in Catalan, a very Catalan environment is needed. For advances in Castilian the predominance of the Castilian media makes this simpler.

What is Catalan's future?

The immediate future for Catalan seems promising, and certainly as a family language, at least, there seems no doubt that it will survive. Whether it acquires and sustains a status as a genuinely equal language with Castilian depends above all on whether the large non-Catalan population can be integrated into Catalonia, and whether they -- or their children at least -- can be taught the language. It depends too on Catalan's effectiveness in competing with Castilian and with other world languages.

It also depends to some extent on Spain maintaining and developing its newly-defined character as a multilingual state. This is moreover fairly limited, insofar as regional languages are only encouraged and officially recognised within the boundaries where they are spoken. No attempt is made, say, to teach Catalan in Seville; or Basque in Catalonia. It is not clear that a Catalan or Basque member of the Spanish parliament would be in their right to speak in Catalan or Basque.

The question arises of how realistic it is to promote Catalan beyond the boundaries of Catalonia. Communications certainly would be simpler in the first instance if Castilian was the only official language, both within the rest of Spain and with much of the outside world. The promotion of Catalan is above all the response to a sense of ethnic identity. Nonetheless, if this 'normalising' process is to be successful, it could be argued that it would not be enough only to aim to make Catalan equal to Castilian in all domains within Catalonia. As a world language and the language of the Spanish state, not to mention the first language of many who live in Catalonia, Castilian will always remain the dominant partner in such a form of bilingualism. If Catalan is not to revert to being only the language of the family and other L domains, it seems logical that it should have to be promoted as the SOLE official language of Catalonia.

This, however, would involve unsavoury discriminatory policies and the sort of planning decisions that lead to unacceptable interventions in people's lives. It would also mean the channelling of limited resources to this end in ways which might be to the detriment of those most in need. For example, it is hard to defend money being spent on the devising of Catalan materials and the training of Immersion Programme teachers, if this should lead to less money being spent on the building and basic equipping of much-needed schools in the first place.

The present policy-makers and language planners have clearly recognised that any overall aim towards Catalan monolingualism would be potentially racist and politically and morally unacceptable. There are those who do not agree with them, but it is hard to see how one can combine enthusiasm and optimism for Catalan's future as a major language with ideologically acceptable levels of social planning.[5]

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[5] There are radical groups who do not believe that the pace of Catalanization is quick enough, and who are intolerant of the non-Catalan population, citing in particular how they were forced to learn Castilian, rather than their mother tongue during the Franco years. Such groups include the CRIDA and the Grups de Defensa de la Llengua. Some leading

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Catalan sociolinguists, however, also worry as to the effectiveness of such an equal bilingualism policy, e.g. Ernesto Sabater:

> 'In a recent publication on bilingualism the following clear opinion of a group of teachers in Quebec appeared, "bilingual education can function in an environment where the mother tongue is not threatened. If the mother tongue is in a position of weakness, then bilingual schooling will deliver the final *coup de grace*." And this is our opinion: Castilian is certainly in no danger of disappearing, but Catalan is, though in the long term [...]' (Sabater 1984: 38).

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